

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF  
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 559.—VOL. XI.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1894.

PRICE 1½d.

## AN OLD ENGLISH SPORT: HAWKING.

THE pursuit of Hawking may be said to have become well-nigh as extinct in England as the nobler varieties of hawks themselves. Occasionally, indeed, the pastime is taken up for a while by some one possessed of the requisite leisure and capacity for training the birds, with the result that a reasonable amount of amusement is obtained. But whether from the scarcity of herons—owing to the better drainage of the country—the absence of professional falconers, the difficulty of securing trained falcons, or from some other causes, the fact remains that this fascinating recreation of the middle ages has practically died out in England; nor does there seem to be any prospect of it ever regaining a permanent footing amongst us. This is much to be regretted. How much of the charm of outdoor life in medieval times was connected with the sport! The baronial castle, with its bright assemblage of knights and ladies thronging forth to pursue the wild heron or fleet hare—the excitement of the chase—the pleasure derived from noting the keen swoop of a falcon or the wily turning of the quarry: such is the scene again and again presented to us in the earlier literature. How many of Shakespeare's and Chaucer's expressions are only intelligible to us from a study of the terms used in hawking! Many of our every-day English and French words, as every reader of Skeat and Brachet will recognise, are derived from this sport, although they may have travelled far from their original meaning. Only to quote, amongst crowds of others, such words as *haggard*, *hire*, and *mews*, in the first language; and *acharné*, *déluré*, in the second. The word *mews* has indeed entirely transferred its meaning from a place where hawks are kept, to a building set apart for horses. The royal mews, where the king's hawks were formerly kept, stood once on the ground now occupied by the National Gallery, close to Charing Cross.

As early as Saxon times, hawking seems to have been established in our island. In a letter addressed to St Boniface, Archbishop of Mayence, King Ethelbert writes, asking for two falcons to fly at the crane, 'for there are very few birds of use for this flight in our own country' (Kent). An historian of the time says of King Alfred: 'His felicity in hunting and hawking, as well as in all other gifts of God, was really incomparable, as I have myself often seen.' William of Malmesbury thus describes Edward the Confessor's love of hunting and hawking: 'It was his chiefest delight to follow a pack of swift hounds in pursuit of their game, and to cheer them with his voice; or to attend the flight of hawks taught to pursue and catch their kindred birds. Every day, after divine service, he took the field, and spent his time in these beloved sports.' It was during Saxon times, too, that the monks of Abingdon found it necessary to procure a charter from the king to restrain the practice, in order to prevent their lands from being trampled on.

Every Welsh chieftain kept a large number of hawks; and in the tenth century the sport seems to have been greatly in favour in that kingdom. The 'master of the hawks' was the fourth officer in rank and dignity, and sat in the fourth place from the sovereign at the royal table. He was permitted to drink no more than three times, lest he should neglect his birds; and when more than usually successful, the Prince was obliged by law to rise up and receive him as he entered the hall. It is said that a British chief, Gannfredus, was struck on the head and killed by an angry woman, because his hawk had seized one of her fowls. The Princes of the Norman dynasty pursued hunting with great enthusiasm. In the Bayeux Tapestry, Harold may be remarked with a sparrow-hawk on his wrist. From the date of Henry I. and during many subsequent reigns, offences against the Crown were punished by a fine of many

hawks. In Stephen's reign, a noble was fined one hundred Norway hawks and as many gerfalcons, of which four of the former and six of the latter were to be white. Laws were passed making it felony to steal a trained hawk, and subjecting offenders to fine and imprisonment. It was also an offence to take the eggs of the bird. In the time of Henry VII. it was enacted that no one should fly a native hawk; but if he wanted a hawk, must import one from abroad. Frequently hawks were given as presents by our kings to foreign Princes, and also received in return. Edward I. received, in 1276, eight gray and three white gerfalcons from the king of Norway, some of which he seems to have sent to the king of Castile, since a letter of his to that sovereign runs: 'We sent you four gray gerfalcons, two of which are trained to fly at crane; and having already lost nine white falcons, we have none of these at present to offer. Meanwhile, we have sent some of our people to Norway to fetch some.' In 1517 we find the Muscovite ambassador having audience with the king, and bringing presents of furs and hawks, with coats embroidered with pearls. Pepys, describing the entry of the Russian ambassador into London, writes: 'I could not see the ambassador in his coat, but his attendants in their habits and fur caps; very handsome, comely men, and most of them with hawks on their fists, to present to the king.' Many anecdotes of the English kings' love of hawking are extant from the earliest times. We read that when Henry II. was at Pembroke, on the way to Ireland, he chanced to see a fine falcon on a crag, and let loose upon it a half-bred Norway hawk. The falcon, however, became in turn the assailant, and stooping from aloft with great fury on the king's hawk, laid it dead at Henry's feet. From that time the king used to send every year for young falcons from the cliffs of South Wales.

Richard I., when in the Holy Land, amused himself with hawking on the Plain of Sharon, and is said to have presented some of these birds to the Sultan. Later on, while passing through Dalmatia, he carried off a falcon which he saw in one of the villages, and refused to give it up. He was attacked so furiously by the justly incensed villagers, that it was with the utmost difficulty that he managed to make his escape. King John used to send both to Ireland and to Norway for his hawks. We are told by Froissart that when Edward III. invaded France, he had thirty falcons, and every day either hunted or went to the river for the purpose of hawking. Henry VII. imported goshawks from France, giving four pounds for a single bird—a much greater sum in those days than at present. Henry VIII. whilst hawking at Hithin was leaping a dyke, when the pole broke, and the king was immersed head

first into the mud, and would have perished, in all probability, had not his falconer dragged him out. Elizabeth and James I. were much interested in the sport; the latter sovereign, indeed, expended considerable sums on its maintenance. Aubrey, in his *Miscellanies*, says: 'When I was a freshman at Oxford, I was wont to go to Christ Church to see Charles I. at supper, where I once heard him say that as he was hawking in Scotland he rode into the quarry, and there found the covey of partridges falling upon the hawk; and I remember his expression further, "And I will swear upon the Book 'tis true."'

It was said that not long before the death of Charles I., a sparrow-hawk escaped from its perch and pitched upon one of the iron crowns of the White Tower, where, entangling its leash in the crown, it hung by the heels and died. This was regarded at the time as a very ominous circumstance. The last member of the royal family who is said to have received hawks from abroad was Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II., who occupied the palace of Durdans, near Epsom, now the residence of Lord Rosebery. The quarry at which the hawks were flown varied with the breed of falcon employed. The peregrine was generally used to attack rooks, crows, or magpies; the gerfalcons would be flown at herons and cranes; while the goshawk, a more sluggish bird, would suffice for partridges and rabbits. The tiny merlin, which was the ladies' favourite bird, would be used for smaller game, such as black-birds or larks. Further information about hawks and hawking may be found in Mr Harting's interesting book and lectures, from which we have largely quoted; whilst an excellent account of the 'History of Hawking in Norfolk,' down to the present century, is given by Professor Alfred Newton in a pamphlet on Lubbock's Fauna of that county. The latter writer gives an amusing extract from Blome's 'Gentlemen's Recreation,' which quaintly describes the way in which the kite—itsself a species of hawk—was assailed by the falcon: 'There is a pretty way for the flying of a kite which affords good diversion; it is thus performed: Get an owl, and tie a small fox-tail, or some such device, to one of her legs, that she may not give you the go-by; and, being in the field, the day being warm and clear, you will soon discover a kite cooling herself in the air; then let your owl fly, and the kite will not fail to make haste to gaze upon her; and when the kite is descended pretty near her, then let fly your hawk, and the kite, perceiving the surprise, doth endeavour to preserve herself by mounting up and winding the most she can; and here the combat begins; but oftentimes none can see when it ends—both mount out of sight. But in the end the hawk becomes

victor, and by main strength and courage beats down the kite, yet not without many turns and wrenches in the air, to the great pleasure of the spectators.'

## THE LAWYER'S SECRET.\*

### CHAPTER XIII.—FOUND DEAD.

POLICE constable Q99 (known as Pirret to his friends and acquaintances) was often heard to say that he considered his beat in Chancery Lane one of the best in London, certainly the best in the Q Division. At night the pavements were deserted, save in one or two small side-streets, inhabited chiefly by office-cleaners and their families. All through the day the streets were filled with lawyers and lawyers' clerks, patent agents, and clients, who never gave policeman Pirret any trouble, except by calling on him to act as arbitrator in the case of a disputed cab fare.

On the evening of Thursday, the 14th of September, Constable Q99 was pacing down Norfolk Street in his usual leisurely manner. It had been an unusually quiet day—quiet to dullness. There was a sunset somewhere, far beyond those smoke-grimed walls and lofty chimneys, and a reflected radiance shone through the stifling, smoky air. It was not hot; but there was no vitality in the air; it seemed to have been breathed over and over again until the oxygen had gone out of it; and the policeman felt tired and languid, though he did not know why.

He was just thinking that it was possible for a beat to be too quiet, when he noticed a woman, a stout, elderly woman, a few yards ahead of him, come hastily down the steps of the block of buildings known as No. 9. She was behaving in a peculiar way—running (when she got to the street), and then stopping short in an aimless fashion, uttering incoherent cries, and moving her hands, clasped in front of her, up and down, as if they were being worked by a machine.

In another moment she had caught sight of the policeman, and began running towards him. Constable Pirret did not quicken his pace by a fraction of an inch per second.

'Well, my woman, what's up now?'

'Oh dear me, it gave me sich a turn!'

'What gave you sich a turn?'

'It's that suddent. To be took off like that, without, you may say, a moment's warning! And him so well this morning, ever so much better!'

'I can't make out what you mean to be at. Speak plain, can't you? Is anybody dead?'

'Yes, he's dead. Oh dear! Oh dear me!'

'Who is dead?'

'Mr Felix, as lives at No 9. I went in to get him his dinner, as he wasn't able to go out, and I found him lying on the couch, stone-dead! Oh deary me!'

'Show me the way,' said the policeman sternly.

Already a few messengers and junior clerks

on their way home had collected to listen to what the woman had to say; and they followed at a respectful distance, knowing that if they pressed too close, they would be driven off.

'I seem to know your face,' said the constable to his companion.

'Bird is my name,' answered the woman. 'I've been laundress to Mr Felix, and done for him, this fifteen years past o' Chrissmiss; and now, to think of him lying there dying all by hisself!'

'There—that'll do,' said Mr Pirret, who was superior to irrelevant sentiments.

Mrs Bird had left the door of the lawyer's office open. She and the constable passed through the clerks' room and the solicitor's private room to the dining-room. The fireplace was on the left-hand side of the room; and on the right hand was a small table with a tray containing dishes, among them a water carafe and a tumbler. Between this table and the fireplace was a writing-table with a tall back, containing pigeon-holes for papers. Close to the writing-desk the constable noticed a japanned tin-box, closed, but not locked.

Beyond the writing-table, and nearly opposite the fireplace, was a small, old-fashioned 'claw-foot' table, large enough to hold a tray for a meal, or writing materials. And beyond that, again, on the other side of the fireplace, was a couch—a couch with the form of a man on it, apparently sleeping.

Mrs Bird remained near the door. The policeman advanced, and touched the man's face. It was already cold.

'We must send for a doctor,' exclaimed the policeman. 'We must have a doctor, even if he can't do no good, for there must be a hinquet, that's plain.—Where's the nearest doctor, Mrs Bird? Run and fetch him—take a cab, if it's any distance. I'll stay here till you come back.'

In less than a quarter of an hour the doctor had arrived—a toilworn, careworn man of fifty.

'I am Dr Macleod,' he said to the constable. 'Where is?—Ah! I see.' He bent down over the prostrate form on the couch, and made a short examination. 'I should say it's all over with him. Overdose of some narcotic, I fancy. But we must try and bring him to. I'll do what I can at once, and then you had better take him to a hospital. He can't be properly treated here.'

A stretcher and an ambulance were fetched; and the lifeless body of Mr Felix was taken to the Great Northern Hospital. It was not long, however, before the surgeons desisted from their labours. It was useless. James Felix had gone to his account.

Dr Macleod had left some of his belongings in the room where the body was found, and he went back for them on his way home. He found a small crowd outside the door; and upstairs another smaller crowd was lingering near the door of the office. Inside, Constable Pirret was standing on guard. An Inspector of Police had just arrived. He was making a tour of the room and of the bedroom beyond, poking here and there. Dr Macleod and he had met over police cases before, and they nodded each other a greeting.

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'Any hope of restoring him?' asked the Inspector.

The doctor shook his head. 'He's as dead as ever he will be,' was the answer.

'What do they make out he died of?'

'An overdose of some preparation of cocaine, I fancy.'

The Inspector started, straightened himself up, and looked straight at the doctor. 'Sure of that?' he inquired.

'I fancy there's little doubt of it. But why do you ask?'

'We must find out who gave it him—that's all.'

'He took it himself, most likely.'

'No; he didn't.'

'How do you know that, Clarke?'

'Because there isn't a phial here with any trace of such a thing about it, as far as I can see. There's a tumbler over there with a few drops of water left in it. And there's a cup that has had soup or beef-tea in it. Of course, what is there must be analysed. But I can find no phial with any narcotic in it. That shows that somebody must have given him the drug, doesn't it? If he had taken it himself, the phial would have been here.'

'He may have sent out for some, and the clerk or servant who fetched it may have taken away the empty phial.'

'Oh, that's possible enough. I only mean that we must make some inquiries, and find out how it actually happened.'

During this conversation, the two men had passed through the office and gained the door. A few clerks and loungers, with a number of women employed to clean offices, were gathered in the passage.

'Are any of you clerks in this office?' demanded the Inspector.

'No, sir,' promptly responded a voice.

The police-officer looked sharply round, and his eyes met those of a boy of fourteen who stood almost at his elbow. The boy had a small, pale face, without a particle of shyness or reserve—the face of an eager, restless, precocious London youth.

'What do you know about it?' said the Inspector roughly.

'I know wot you arsked, and I give you an arnswer,' answered the boy, in a tone of injured dignity. 'I'm a clerk in there, Touchpenny & Diggs—he pointed across the passage as he spoke—and I know the clerks belonging to this office—Father Matthew, an' Lardy Dardy Dan. They ain't neither of 'em 'ere.'

'Do you know where they live?'

'No.'

'When did they leave?'

'Lardy Dardy Dan'—

'Speak a little more respectfully, my lad.'

'Dan O'Leary's away on his holidays.'

'Well—he isn't the only clerk, I suppose?'

'There's only one more, old Matthew Fane. He was out part of the afternoon, but he left about five o'clock, as usual.'

'Is that the usual time for closing solicitors' offices?' This was said with a sidelong look of deep cunning, as if the Inspector was convinced that the lad was trying to deceive him.

'It is, about here, in the middle of September.'

The Inspector threw an inquiring look at the constable, who nodded a corroboration of the boy's statement.

'There was a lady come about 'arf-past three'—continued the lad.

'How do you know that?' interrupted Clarke.

'If you like, I'll show you,' said the boy; 'but will you let me go to the hinkwest? I heard them say there's sure to be a hinkwest.'

'You'll be called as a witness, if you have anything to tell the jury,' answered the police-officer diplomatically.

'Get her to open the office then—Touchpenny's, I mean—and I'll show you how.' As the lad spoke, he nodded in the direction of one of the office-cleaners; and the Inspector beckoned to her to open the door of Mr Touchpenny's office.

Once inside, the boy went straight to a small airless den, not quite four feet by three, furnished with a high narrow desk and a high stool. This box was separated from the passage outside by a partition, the upper part of which was of glass, painted white, so as to prevent any one outside seeing into the office. The office-boy, however, had scratched a tiny hole in the paint at such a height above the level of his desk that, while apparently bending over his work, he enjoyed a view of the passage outside, and could amuse himself by watching the various visitors as they came and went. This hole in the paint the boy pointed out to the Inspector; and the policeman saw at once that a person might have visited Mr Felix and thought himself unobserved, while the lad's sharp eye had been upon him all the time.

'Well, I can't stop any longer now,' said the Inspector. 'Mind you're here at half-past nine to-morrow morning.—What's your name, by the way?'

'Atkins, sir—Edward Leopold Atkins.'

'Very good, Edward Leopold Atkins. You give the policeman your address, and see that I find you here at half-past nine to-morrow morning.'

Master Atkins, who now found himself a public character, and the object of envy to all the junior clerks of the street, was punctual next morning. He overtook Inspector Clarke just as he reached the landing at the top of the stairs. 'Oh, you're there, are you?' growled the Inspector. He had a rooted dislike to boys in general, and to sharp lads like Mr Edward Atkins in particular. 'I hadn't time to talk to you last night; but I want you to give me an exact account of the people who came to see Mr Felix yesterday, as far as you know. Now the clerk, you said, left about five?'

'Yes, sir; and here he is, to answer you himself.'

Fane came up-stairs at that moment. He carried a newspaper in his hand, and seemed very pale.

'Ah, your name's Fane?' said the Inspector, stepping forward. 'You know what's happened here, I suppose?'

'I've just read an account of it,' said Fane, holding up the paper in his hand. 'As I was coming along the street, I saw on the placard of



the *Telegraph* "Mysterious Death of a Solicitor;" so, out of pure curiosity, I stopped and bought a copy. Little did I think it was my own employer, sir. The thing has quite upset me; so sudden it was!"

'You may say so, very sudden. When did you see Mr Felix last?'

'About half-past three, I think it would be; he came to me in the outer office, and sent me on a message to the City.'

'Ah, well; you'll have to tell all about it at the inquest. You give me your name and address, and you shall get a summons to attend.'

### COOLGARDIE.

It was at one time generally believed that the unexplored regions of the vast Eastern Division of Western Australia consisted merely of sandy desert or arid plains, producing at most scrub, and spinifex or 'poison plants.' In recent years, however, a faith that the interior would prove rich in various mineral resources began to dawn, and rose in proportion as each report of a new 'find' was made to the Government. But only a few ventured to cherish a hope that tracts of fertile country were lying beyond their ken, awaiting the advent of the explorer whose verdict upon the nature of the soil, or possibilities of obtaining water, would result in settlement, and prosperity, and civilisation.

By the opening up of the country surrounding Coolgardie—situated at a distance of three hundred and sixty-eight miles inland from Fremantle, the port of Perth—it has been proved that not only thousands of square miles of auriferous country are contained in these once despised 'back blocks,' but also large areas of rich pasturage and forest-lands.

Very little is known in England of the extent and importance of the five great gold-fields already proclaimed within the boundaries of what it was once the fashion to call the 'Cinderella of the South,' but which is now more generally spoken of as 'The Coming Colony.' This is, however, less surprising than that similar ignorance should exist in the sister colonies. A few months ago a Sydney paper published the following piece of information: 'Coolgardie is not a continuation of the Murchison; Southern Cross is. Coolgardie is four hundred miles east-by-north from Perth, from which you rail it to York only. It is about one hundred and fifty miles from Esperance Bay.' This is a truly astonishing blunder. On the map which lies before me, both Coolgardie and Southern Cross are found within the proclaimed limits of the Yilgarn gold-field, which, roughly estimated, covers an area of forty-six thousand square miles, and is situated in the Eastern Division; whereas the Murchison, a totally distinct gold-field, is in the Gascoyne, and lies to the north of Yilgarn.

Little more than eighteen months have elapsed since Bayley's sensational discovery of gold at Coolgardie attracted world-wide attention

to the hidden treasure of Western Australia. Yet in this brief space of time, settlement has been carried far into the interior. Even within the last few months, the hardships of the journey to Coolgardie have been considerably lessened, as the Yilgarn railway has already been pushed on as far as Southern Cross, two hundred and forty-four miles from Fremantle. This town was the centre of the field until the discovery of Bayley's mine laid the foundation of its rival's future supremacy. The remainder of the journey may now be made by coach; frequent camel trains and teams of horses carry provisions of all kinds to Coolgardie; but hundreds of the poorer seekers after fortune are obliged to 'hump their swags'—as they would themselves describe carrying their loads—and tramp along the track through the bush.

After leaving Southern Cross, the first camping-place is reached at a distance of eight miles. Here a small tank, made by Government labour, is surrounded by a good fence, and belongs to the Warden and police. These stations are called 'soaks,' or 'rock-holes,' if made—as they usually are—in the vicinity of granite rocks. Above the level plain of desert vegetation towers a peaked or round-backed mass of granite. Some rise to the height of one hundred feet, and may cover an area of many acres. Down their bare, brown sides courses the infrequent rainfall, and is absorbed by the soil at the base, which, as a rule, is well grassed, and in its deeper places probably contains a surface spring, which constitutes 'the soak.' Or, perhaps there is a tank-like hollow in the rock—sometimes several—and these are the 'rock-holes.'

The next important stage is called Yellow-dine Rock, and is between nineteen and twenty miles on the road to Coolgardie. Around this spot there is abundant evidence that much labour was lost before the water was lured from its hidden springs. Numerous trial-shafts and bore-holes break the ground. But perseverance was at length rewarded, and a fair supply was obtained. Several of the wells are fenced round, to preserve the water from pollution, and troughs constructed for the use of stock.

The track next leads through country which is described as metamorphic. Having traversed this region, the traveller is refreshed by the sight of a placid lake; but, alas, a draught of its deceptive waters means more maddening thirst than before, for it is salt. Then on for seven or eight miles, through forests of morrell and salmon-gum, to Morling Rock. Here, beneath the shade of lofty trees, abundant grass can be obtained by the stock, and the soil is particularly rich and suited for agriculture.

About three miles farther on, at the rock Karalee, a magnificent view of the Koolyanobbing Hills, which lie about thirty miles to the north-west-by-north, is to be seen. The country passed through in this last short stage is said to be very good land, more or less sandy, and interspersed with thickets. But in Australia the fact that soil is sandy does not mean that it is poor; when irrigated, it is

highly productive, as has been proved by the returns from that already under cultivation in the settled districts.

The forest is again entered on leaving Karalee; then for a short distance the track leads across a sand-plain, with occasional patches of rich-looking soil, till Kooralyee is reached. Starting from the latter place, the worst part of the route begins. All around, as far as the eye can reach, stretches an arid and apparently sterile plain. For miles and miles nothing but the cruel spinifex or the 'poison plant' grows, unless where an impenetrable thicket breaks the monotony of the view, looking like a desert island in this shimmering bluey-white ocean of desolation. Beside the track lie the bones or the putrefying carcasses of horses or sheep that have died from eating the poison scrub; or of exhaustion, from dragging their burdens through the burning sand; or perished for want of water. But once safely arrived at Boorabbin Rock, beneath the grateful shade of a clump of sheoak and salmon-gum, the weary traveller and his jaded beasts may rest and quench their thirst. A rather sandy soil is observable in the next five miles of country; then, for a dozen miles or so, the track passes through forests alternating with brief intervals of sand-plain. In the wooded parts the soil is exceedingly rich, and grass is plentiful.

As Coolgardie is approached, the country becomes more undulating; and in the distance Mount Burgess makes a bold and striking feature in the landscape, isolated from the neighbouring low hills. A few miles to the south lies the vigorous little town, surrounded by a halo of tents. It is situated thirty-one degrees south, one hundred and twenty-one degrees east; the climate is therefore temperate, though very hot during the dry season. It has been judiciously laid out, and promises to be one of the prettiest inland towns in the colony. In the principal street, all is bustle and activity: teams arriving from Southern Cross; camels unloading or being driven out by picturesque Afghans; diggers and prospectors setting out for distant 'rushes'; black piccaninies rolling in the dust, or playing with their faithful kangaroo dogs—their dusky parents lollying near with characteristic indolence—and men of every nation and colour under heaven combine to give the scene a character all its own.

There are good stores, numerous thriving hotels; and a hospital has lately been started in charge of two trained nurses. The spiritual needs of the population are supplied by Wesleyan services and Salvation Army meetings. As yet the public buildings are not architecturally imposing; the principal one is a galvanised iron shed which does duty for a post-office. When the bi-weekly mail arrives, the two officials, with the aid of an obliging trooper, vainly endeavour to sort the letters and newspapers quickly enough to satisfy the crowd, all eager for news from home. During the hot dry months, Coolgardie has been almost cut off from the outside world. It was found necessary to limit the traffic between it and Southern Cross, owing to the

great scarcity in the 'soaks' and wells along the road. Condensers have been erected at various stations close to the salt lakes, and the water retailed by the gallon; by this means the road can be kept open till the wet season sets in.

Prospectors are energetically exploring the country in every direction around Coolgardie, and from all sides come glowing accounts of the quality of the land, which, besides being auriferous, is undoubtedly suitable for agricultural and pastoral purposes. To the eastward lie many thousands of acres of undulating pasture-land, wooded like a park with morrell, sandalwood, wild peach, zimlet-wood, salmon-gum, and other valuable timbers. The soil is a rich red loam, which with cultivation should equal the best wheat-growing districts of Victoria. So green and abundant is the grass, that it has been described as looking like an immense wheat-field before the grain has formed. Several kinds of grass are to be found: the fine kangaroo variety; a species of wild oats; and a coarse jointed grass, all of which stock eat with relish, and thrive, it is said.

A Water Supply Department has been formed by the Western Australian Government, and measures are being taken to obtain supplies of artesian water as well as to construct a system of reservoirs and dams on a large scale. For the latter purpose the soil is said to be well suited; and during the rainy season there is no lack of surface-water. In many parts of Australia this method of maintaining a supply is considered more reliable than that of well-sinking or boring.

It is evident that the natural conditions are favourable for attracting a permanent population of traders and agriculturists, the produce of whose industry should supply the demands of the mining community. There is undoubtedly a great future for reefing operations on this field, where, it may be mentioned, Bayley's Reward Claim is by no means the only valuable property. Leases have been taken up for miles along the chain of hills. Mr Bayley's discovery of Coolgardie might serve as an apt illustration of 'the early-bird' theory. While on a prospecting expedition in September 1892, he went one auspicious morning to look after his horse before breakfast. A gleaming object lying on the ground caught his eye. It was a nugget, weighing half an ounce. By noon, he, with his mate, had picked up twenty ounces of alluvial gold. In a couple of weeks they had a store of two hundred ounces. It was on a Sunday afternoon that they struck the now world-famed Reward Claim, and in a few hours they had picked off fifty ounces. Next morning they pegged out their prospecting area. But whilst thus profitably employed, they were unpleasantly surprised by the arrival of three miners who had followed up their tracks from Southern Cross. The discoverers worked on during the day at the cap of the reef, and by such primitive methods as the 'dolly-pot,' or pestle and mortar, easily obtained three hundred ounces of the precious metal. The unwelcome visitors stole two hundred ounces of the gold, a circumstance which

obliged them to report their 'find' sooner than they would otherwise have done, fearing that, if they delayed, the thieves would do so instead, and claim the reward from the Government.

On condition that they would not molest his mate during his absence, Mr Bayley agreed to say nothing about their having robbed him, and set out on his long ride to Southern Cross. He took with him five hundred and fifty-four ounces of gold with which to convince the Warden that his discovery was a genuine one. The field was declared open after his interview with the authorities.

No one will dispute that this mineral wealth must prove a source of immense prosperity to Western Australia; but of no less importance is the fact that the soil is rich and productive. The ultimate and enduring development of a country must depend on the labour and thrift of a different class of settlers from those who compose the majority of a rush to the gold-fields. Miners are usually only eager to 'make their pile,' so that they may return to the haunts of civilisation, taking with them the riches they may have amassed. That the country surrounding Coolgardie is suitable for permanent settlement is of vast importance, not alone to Western Australians but to Englishmen, to whom it should open up a fresh field for enterprise and colonisation.

## A TALE OF OLD EDINBURGH.

### CHAPTER III.—THE ELIXIR.

THE leader of the Saltee Rovers turned, and waited for the Lord Provost to speak.

'Sir,' said the Provost, 'we see no way of winning out of this trouble ye have brought upon our town save and except by submitting ourselves to your very hard and burdensome requisition. I speak in the name of the haill Council.'

'And look ye, Captain-rover,' broke in the Town-clerk hurriedly, 'we must hae time granted to pay the contribution: that's but reasonable in law and equity, as I tauld my Lord Provost; and forbye, it would be baith conformable and gracious in a son of the auld town, as I understand your roving honour to be, to remit or postpone a guid whang of that same contribution.'

'I have not acknowledged, sir,' said the Rover-captain loftily, 'that I owe aught to this ancient town; nor, in sooth, do I.'

'I may have been deceived, sir,' said the Provost with a simple, pathetic dignity, 'in thinking ye must be in some sort a son or a friend of our auld town; I hope I may, if you are to maintain a hard, cruel heart. But, sir, if ye have any humanity, ye'll abate your requisition; not that we would have you spare fat purses, but that ours are at the present time something of the leanest. In truth, sir, I know not where we should collect you twenty thousand gold-pieces in a twelvemonth; for our town is wasted by requisitions for our

army in England, and for our levies with the Lords of the Convention, and now with this plague that the town is smitten with. Our purses are well nigh empty, and our families are dying; and I pray ye, sir, take that into your account.'

The Rover-captain was plainly touched with the Provost's dignified plea. He frowned, looked down, bit his lip, and considered; and when he looked up to speak, the Town-clerk declared afterwards that 'a tear was in his e'e.'

'I have had in my time,' said he, 'a friend or two native to this town. For their sake, sirs, I will reduce my requisition to one-half; but I must demand hostages for its payment on noon of the third day, at the end of the pier of Leith.'

'Three days!' exclaimed the Town-clerk, while the rest looked blue, and cast glances of dismay on each other. 'Ye might as well say three hours!'

'Wouns, sirs!' cried the Rover-captain, 'have I not been easy enough for ye in dividing the sum by two?—Three days, I say,' he repeated, in the tone of one who is not wont to be questioned or contradicted: 'no more and no less. And the Lord Provost and the Bailies will deliver to me instanter each his eldest son, to be held by me as hostage for the stipulated sum.'

'My son?' exclaimed the Provost. 'Alack! I have no son! I have but a daughter, and she lies sick of the plague!'

'Sick of the plague!' exclaimed the Rover-captain with a new, a singular, a sprightly kind of interest. He had given his attention to the discussion of the terms of the ransom with a dull, obstinate, business-like persistency, of which he seemed half ashamed; but now all that was changed, and his eye sparkled and his voice rang with hope and vivacity, inasmuch that the whole Council wondered, and listened in silence, with a sure instinct that here somehow was a new turn of the business. 'Is she your only daughter, Provost?'

'The only daughter or bairn,' said the Provost, almost in tears, 'that I ever had.'

'Ay,' broke in the Town-clerk, 'an' she was a blithesome and a bonny ane.'

'Was, sir?' exclaimed the Rover-captain.

'You speak as if she already had passed!'

'Na, na,' said the Town-clerk; 'I'm not aye to cast down any man. But there's not a single body ance smitten that has got ower this plague yet.'

'Tut!' exclaimed the Rover-captain. 'Ye make this wark about the plague because ye are so little acquaint with it. In the towns of Barbary we have it, like the poor, always with us. I've been myself smitten with it twice, and I always carry with me an elixir that is potent to drive it out. If it be not too long since the maiden was smitten, I will engage myself to cure her.'

'I am obliged to ye, sir,' answered the father; 'but she has already been waited on by a worthy leech and chirurgeon, and my ain mother sits by her, who has as great a knowledge of simples as any.'

'Nay, but, sir,' pleaded the Rover-captain with a singular earnestness, 'the treatment of

the plague is a special knowledge which I have had from a very learned Arabian doctor; and all men know that none have ever attained to such medical skill as the Arabian doctors of Spain.—How long is it since the maiden was smitten?

'She was smitten about six of the clock yester e'en,' said the Provost.

'There wants yet two hours of the prescribed limit of twelve. I will send with all speed to my ship for the elixir; and, with your permission, Provost, I will administer it on the instant it is brought.—Decide, sir,' he urged; 'for there is no time for further parley.' Then, seeing the Provost still hesitate, he exclaimed, as if on a new thought: 'If I cure the maiden, then I shall claim her only as a hostage for the ransom;' and he glanced at the Provost's colleagues with a contemptuous smile of expectation, for he guessed that they would now readily back his desire. And they did.

'Hoot, neighbour Wishart,' said one of the Bailies, 'let the Captain but try. If he disna prosper in his task, there will be nae harm done belike. And after a', the issue is with the Lord.'

'But if the lassie should die under his hand?' exclaimed the father.

'We are all in the hands of God, Provost,' said the Captain. 'If the maiden die, she will but be as she would be sure to be without my elixir, according to the testimony of your colleagues.'

'That she will,' said the Town-clerk and the Bailies promptly.

'But,' said the Captain, 'I am ready to stake the ransom on her cure. If I fail to cure the maiden, then I abandon my requisition, and I sail away no richer than I came!'

'That's a noble offer!' exclaimed the Clerk and the Council in chorus. 'Now, Provost, there is but ae thing to say to that!'

'Ye all press too hard on me!' cried the Provost. 'But be it as you will.'

In an instant the Rover-captain was out of the room, with the supremely interested Wattie at his heels; and in another second or two one of the horsemen was riding down the street to Leith, with Wattie trotting by him as guide. Then the Council all left the Town-house to provide some refreshment for the Rovers; and the Provost went to his own abode to prepare for the coming of the Rover-captain. When the news of the undertaking spread, and that the ransom of the town was now dependent on its success, the excitement of the crowd grew to fever-height, and the curiosity about the Rovers and their Captain became dangerously friendly. There was only one found denouncing the arrangement, and that was the Rev. Mr Galbraith. It was a sinful thing, he declared, and a blasphemous, that an outlandish, heathenish man should be permitted to administer drugs and incantations to a Christian lassie; and to put her life on the wager of the ransom was no better than casting dice, and was as bad as selling her to the Evil one. But his listeners, though respectful, were in no mood to give heed to his lecture. The interest of the ransom of the town and the life of the Provost's daughter both hanging in the balance, touched them far

more closely both in their business and their bosoms.

The unintelligible strangers were fed with whangs of bannock and kebbucks of cheese; and the citizens, while they looked on, were surprised that such a piratical, ruffianly crew would drink nothing but water. Ale and strong waters, they heard the strange Rover-captain say, were forbidden by their religion; and they gazed with new curiosity and amazement both on the outlandish leader, who spoke their own speech, and on his following, who only jabbered barbarously. Women and children—for, though it was still very early morning, all were now astir—craned their heads from the high windows of the Canongate and the High Street to see the fearsome men in strange coloured garments and white bonnets, eating and chattering in the street below, while the morning sun glinted on their weapons; and there gradually rose even to them in their eeries the news that the Captain, who still sat on his horse, was waiting to cure of the plague the daughter of the Lord Provost, and they wondered if there would be any of the medicine left for poor plague-smitten folk, after the Provost's daughter had had all she might need.

After more than an hour, the horseman who had gone to Leith was seen returning up the Canongate. He was met by the Rover-captain, who took from him a case-phial, and hastily entered the house of the Lord Provost, while his bodyguard of horsemen surrounded the door. The Provost led, and the Captain followed straight to the sick-chamber. There the Provost's wife and mother were waiting—in some prepared anxiety, evidently; for they rose immediately on the appearance of the turbaned figure and came forward eagerly to question the Rover-captain on the potency and compounding of his elixir.

'What will be the effect on the lassie?' whispered the mother.

'Aiblins,' murmured the grandmother, 'I would ken the cordial, if ye would let me put it to my lips.'

'It is not a cordial, madame, in your sense,' said the Captain. 'It is an essence, a refined spirit, and a few drops are potent for this purpose.—But permit me, ladies, to wait upon the suffering maiden'—and he bowed in a very courtly fashion—'for this elixir must be administered within twelve hours of the smiting, and the time, I am given to understand, is well-nigh expired.'

He stepped over to the bed, where the lovely Madge was still tossing her fever-wrought head, and bent over her earnestly. He took her hand and laid his finger on her wild pulse. He pushed back the drawn curtains from the bed as far as they would go, so that the light might enter freely into the recess where she lay, and again looked earnestly upon her; and the strange head and face and the strange head-gear seemed to arrest and hold the attention of the maiden's fevered and distracted eye. Then he rose, sniffed the air of the room, and went without hesitation and flung wide the window of the room.

'Eh, sirs!' exclaimed the two women, and held up hands of horror and affright. 'It'll



be the death of her!' And they appealed to the Provost himself, who stood aloof and silent, but quickly observant.

'It is a proper rule,' said the Provost, 'if you have entrusted a man with an affair of moment, not to meddle with the way it may seem good to him to fulfil his business.'

The Captain said nothing to the criticisms on his procedure, but asked for water like one who is wont to be obeyed. The water was brought; he poured a little into a cup, and into it he counted so many drops of the elixir. 'Raise the maiden,' said he, glancing at her mother.

The maiden was raised, and the Rover-captain put to her lips the cup with the watered elixir. She was made to drink, and then she was laid back on her pillow. The Captain demanded with his hand that there might be complete silence in the chamber; and he sat down by the bed to watch the effect of the medicine. The maiden at first rolled her fevered head as she had done any time for hours; then gradually her eyes drooped and closed, gradually and gently her head ceased its movement, and at length she sank to sleep like a tired child. The Captain took her hand to feel the pulse; but when the pulse was counted, he still kept the hand—a beautiful, long, nervous girl's hand—in his own, and let his eyes dwell on the lovely head with the dark hair all spread abroad on the pillow, and on the gently heaving chest—heaving like the long swell of the sea when a storm has abated. He sat thus silent and watchful for a good while, and what he thought of I may not try to say. At length he laid his hand gently on her brow: it was moist. He turned to the Provost who was by him.

'Go, sir,' said he, 'and get a litter ready.'

'A litter?' exclaimed the Provost. 'For wha, sir? For what?'

'It is a rule, sir,' said the Captain, repeating the Provost's own words, 'if you have entrusted a man with an affair of moment, not to meddle with the way it may seem good to him to fulfil his business.'

And the Provost bowed and went out.

The Captain sat on patiently by the bedside. The Provost returned after some time, and said that the litter was ready; and the Captain said it was well, but that they must wait. And still he sat on and watched the face, while the parents and the grandparent, overdone with want of sleep and anxiety, dropped to sleep in their chairs.

After a little while the Provost woke, and came and sat over against the Captain. And as they thus sat in silence, watching for the waking of the sleeping maiden, the Provost began to regard the other with a more and more friendly eye.

'Think ye,' asked the anxious father at length, 'that the elixir is doing its work?'

'The elixir, sir, is acting as it ought,' said the Captain. 'It has brought back to the skin its natural function of moisture, and anon it will have expelled, or driven out, the plague poison, with the help of certain wrap-pages to promote heat.'

'If the lassie be indeed snatched frae the

jaws of death,' said the Provost with feeling, 'then, sir, I will be owing you more than I can ever pay, not even excepting my component of your requisition.' And he laid his hand friendly-wise upon the Captain's knee.

The Captain took the hand in his own and squeezed it with a surprising warmth. 'There's no need to say that, Provost,' said he. 'The pleasure of curing the maiden—your daughter—is enough to a man that has occupied the deplorable situation I have occupied all these years.'

'Ye like not, then, your trade of rover and pirate?' asked the Provost, with a quick touch of compassion. 'Spite of your disclaim, Captain, I have it more and more borne in on me that you are a Scotsman, and hae the tongue of the auld town. Now, if there be aught in remede of your condition that the official head of the town can do, or aught in the past needs setting straight'—

'Let us not speak of it, Provost,' said the Captain, resuming his reserve. 'If a man makes his bed, he must e'en lie in it. And, speaking of beds, the litter is ready, I think ye told me?'

'The litter?' exclaimed the Provost, reminded that this man, towards whom he was beginning to experience a friendly feeling, was virtually in possession of the town, and was truly an enemy to be suspected. 'Ay, sir, the litter is ready. And I would fain inquire at ye now, sir, wha the litter is about to contain?'

'To contain?' replied the Captain. 'The maiden here—your daughter. Who other?'

'I doubt, sir,' said the Provost, shaking his head, 'that I have been mistaken in ye. This is not in accord with the profession ye have made but this instant; for ye must have a heart as hard as the nether millstone to insist at this preceese moment on the pact that she is hostage for the ransom, and to take her out of her bed and carry her aff when she is only belike winning out of the dead-thraw, as ye may say.'

'Troth, Provost,' answered the Captain, 'if you'll believe me, I had clean forgotten that the maiden is my hostage: it was to complete her cure, not to hold her as hostage, that I designed to carry her off.'

'Cure her by carrying her off straight frae her bed? Cure a cat by drowning it? What havers is that, man?' exclaimed the Provost.

'Hut, tut!' exclaimed the other with composure. 'Don't mistake me, Provost. If her cure is to be speedy, perfect, and complete, we must take her out of this pestiferous air.'

'Where to, may I inquire of ye?' asked the suspicious Provost.

'On board my ship, where she will have the free, caller air of the Firth.'

'On board your ship, to be sure! Whaur other, man?' said the Provost ironically.

'On Arthur's Seat, if ye will, Provost. If the haill bourach of your townfolk, Provost, could be camped out upon Arthur's Seat for a while, ye'd soon have done with the plague. But ye maun perceive, man, that it is not possible for me in my situation to wait upon the maiden to Arthur's Seat.'

'There are others, I doubt not, sir,' said the

Provost, becoming more and more suspicious and angry, 'would be fain to wait on her to Arthur's Seat, if it were necessary.'

'Sir,' said the Captain, losing patience, 'you are ungrateful. I have begun this cure, and there is no other but myself can carry it through. If ye refuse to believe in my goodwill, ye must submit to my authority. And ye remind me yourself that there is not only the life of your daughter at stake, but also, in accordance with the pact I foolishly made, the ransom of the town, which is of the greatest consequence to my comrades.'

That was somewhat rashly and cruelly said; but it must be admitted that the Rover-captain was provoked. Their voices had been unwittingly raised considerably higher than the whisper in which they had begun, and their sound appeared to disturb the sleeping maiden. She stirred softly and sighed, and both the Captain and her father were on the instant silent and attentive. That pause gave both the opportunity to abate their temper, which had gone previously near an explosion. The Provost noted the ready tenderness with which the Captain felt the pulse and the brow of the patient, and was ashamed of his suspicion and his petulance; and the Captain thought: 'After all, he's an old man and her father: I must be patient and easy with him.'

'Believe me, Provost,' whispered he earnestly, 'if she's to recover speedily and perfectly, I must take her out of this instant. And I should wish her mother to go with her, for, of course, we have no women-folk on board of us. You may come yourself, too, if it please ye, Provost, and if it would set your mind at rest.'

'Na,' said the Provost; 'I maun bide and gather in the ransom.'

'Troth, I had forgotten that again,' said the Captain.

'But,' continued the Provost, 'if her mither may gang—what for did ye not say that before, Captain?'

'Because,' answered the Captain with a smile, 'as we were wont to say when boys, ye did not speir, sir.'

'Weel, weel,' said the Provost, smiling in return, and patting him on the knee in friendly fashion.

And so the unconscious girl mediated between the two and saved them from a dangerous rupture.

'Her mother, Provost,' said the Captain, 'will be needed soon: she had better be preparing herself.'

The Provost, therefore, went over to his wife and mother and waked them, and disclosed to them the news. After some argument, his wife accepted the situation, though with fear and trembling, and rose to prepare to accompany her daughter on board one of the pirate ships.

'The Lord will be with you, my woman,' said the Provost's mother, to cheer her. 'He is a very present help in time of trouble. Trust in Him, my dochter.—And the Captain-child seems a sonsy, canny lad, after a'. He has a hamely look, and a hereawa' tongue, for a' his being a pirate in a white turbant.'

At length—full three hours after the elixir

had been administered—the sufferer woke gently, and yawned with a long, audible breath. She opened her eyes and fixed them languidly on the Captain, but with the strange and simple speculation of a child. A flash even of something like recognition passed over them; and then the Captain sprang to his feet, and prepared and administered a second dose of the elixir; and again in a little while she sank off to sleep.

'Now, quick!' said he. 'Ye must aid me to wrap her in all the bedclothes, and to put a piece of old sail, old canvas, or anything impermeable to damp, round all.'

The most impermeable thing that could be produced was a cloak of thick homespun; and thus swathed and wrapped, the maiden was raised and carried forth in the Captain's arms; for, as he said, he was the youngest and strongest to bear the burden.

'Eh, sirs,' exclaimed the Provost's mother, as he departed, 'but he hauds her as fealty and saftly as a mither would carry a wean!'

#### WHERE GENIUS WORKS.

ALL that concerns the men and women who give distinction to their day is of interest to those who admire, criticise, and perhaps envy their achievements. A special and legitimate curiosity is felt in reference to the conditions under which success is won. Glimpses are occasionally given into the methods of eminent toilers, and a wonderful variety is revealed. It is at least plain that no guide-book to great performances—the anxious author can have his choice of several—will determine the point where exactly the best results are to be obtained. One man's help is another man's hindrance. Many famous writers, for instance, have only been able to perfect their thoughts in silence and seclusion. But there have also been those who could work in the midst of babel and defy distraction. Jane Austen, whose unpretentious canvases are full of some of the most life-like portraits in fiction, was never in the habit of seeking solitude to compose. She wrote sitting in the family circle, and under perpetual risk of interruption. It was the same with a successful lady novelist happily still living. Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote her best-known story on a plain pine-table, by the aid of an evening lamp, in a tiny wooden house in Maine. About her were gathered children of various ages, conning their lessons or at play, and never guessing what a treasure-mine of excitement was coming into existence for other young people in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' A large part of the 'Roman History' of Dr Arnold was composed under similar circumstances. Dean Stanley has sketched the Rugby study, where Arnold sat at his work, 'with no attempt at seclusion, conversation going on around him—his children playing in the room—his frequent guests, whether friends or former pupils, coming in or out at will.' Thomas Lovell Beddoes, a poet of luxuriant fancy and true genius, though much neglected, also found a stimulus to the creative faculty of his muse in working in playful and even noisy company. Such cases recall the story of the learned man

of Padua who assured Montaigne that he actually needed to be hemmed in by uproar before he could proceed to study.

Fastidious order and dainty surroundings have been essential for some eminent *littérateurs*. Douglas Jerrold was a writer of this stamp. His soul seemed to abhor every trace of study slovenliness. A cosy room was his in his home at West Lodge, Lower Putney Common, and his son's pen has given the world a welcome peep at the interior: 'The furniture is simple solid oak. The desk has not a speck upon it. The marble shell upon which the inkstand rests has no litter in it. Various notes lie in a row between clips, on the table. The paper basket stands near the armchair, prepared for answered letters and rejected contributions. The little dog follows his master into his study and lies at his feet.' And there were no books maltreated in Douglas Jerrold's study. It gave him pain to see them in any way misused. Longfellow had the same sympathies with neatness and exactitude. Method in all things was his rule. He did not care to evolve fine thoughts and poetic images at a desk fixed like the one stable rock in an ocean of muddle.

But other distinguished writers have been as careless as these were careful. Carlyle gives us a curious sketch of Leigh Hunt's *ménage*. In one room—the family apartment—a dusty table and a ragged carpet. On the floor, 'books, paper, egg-shells, scissors, and last night when I was there, the torn heart of a half-quarter loaf.' And above, in the workshop of talent—something cleaner—'only two chairs, a book-case, and a writing-table.'

There was much that struck a stranger as confusion in Dr Johnson's chambers in Inner Temple Lane. Boswell describes a visit, saying: 'I found a number of good books, but very dusty and in great confusion. The floor was strewn with manuscript leaves in Johnson's own handwriting, which I beheld with a degree of veneration, supposing they might perhaps contain portions of the "Rambler" or of "Rasselas." I observed an apparatus for chemical experiments, of which Johnson was all his life very fond.'

Partly by reason of his hobbies, 'Christopher North's' favourite study resembled a recently ransacked lumber-room. To a casual eye its contents were a chaos, and there seemed no chance of finding a clew to any article not immediately in sight. Professor Wilson had varied tastes, and his snuggerly was crammed with the belongings of one who was sportsman and naturalist as well as poet and philosopher. The fittings of the room matched the general contents. Book-shelves rudely knocked together of unpainted wood held rows of books, tattered, and often wanting backs. But the famous writer was at home there, and content, and from those uncouth surroundings came many a brilliant essay and exquisite poem.

The acme of luxury in a retreat of genius was surely reached by Bulwer-Lytton. Dr Charles Williams, who had to see the author of 'Zanoni' professionally soon after the publication of that novel of mystery, found Bulwer in a Park Lane house. He reached the interior

through waves of perfume, ever growing stronger, and oddly blending with tobacco-fumes; and 'on a divan' at the remote end of a noble room, 'through a haze of smoke, loomed his lordship's figure, wrapt in an Oriental dressing-robe, with a coloured fez, and half-reclined upon the ottoman.' A different picture this from the old Grub Street type, where, in dismal garrets, immortal tales were told. It contrasts effectively with the 'miserable, dirty-looking room, in which there was but one chair,' wherein Bishop Percy found Oliver Goldsmith, hard at work on his 'Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning.'

Genius has frequently had remarkable workshops. Robert Burns once went galloping over a remote Scottish moor. His horse on this occasion was not much troubled with the guidance of the rider. Burns was busy, brooding over a glorious theme. His lyrical powers touched one of their highest points. The result of the journey was the impassioned national lyric, 'Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled.' J. S. Mill framed his 'Logic' as he walked from his home to his office and back again. Sir Matthew Hale composed his 'Contemplations' as he rode on horseback about country on his circuit journeys. While travelling in the same fashion on his numerous and prolonged preaching tours, John Wesley contrived to accomplish a vast quantity of literary work. Byron composed the larger portion of the 'Corsair' in a London thoroughfare, as he walked up and down Albemarle Street, between Grafton Street and Piccadilly; and states himself that he composed 'Lara' not in the study, but at the toilet table. 'The Revolt of Islam' took form in Shelley's brain as the poet apparently frittered away summer hours lying in a boat on the bosom of the Thames at Marlow.

Sometimes there is a touch of humour about the story of where genius works. Victor Hugo was living in the Place Royale, at Paris, in the revolutionary year 1848. His neighbours knew him as more or less of an eccentric, and gradually they discovered that he was a great poet and dramatist who selected queer working-places. Victor Hugo called one day on a hair-dresser named Brassier, who had a saloon in the vicinity. Seating himself in the barber's chair, he asked to be shaved. But just as the lathering-brush approached his chin, the poet called out 'Wait!' The shopkeeper obeyed; and his customer seized a loose sheet of paper from an adjacent stand, glanced at it to see that its back at any rate was blank, and after fumbling in his pocket for a pencil, commenced to scribble. He went on heedless of the hair-dresser's impatience, and seemed wholly lost to his whereabouts. It was a ludicrous scene, and it ended as strangely as it began. A gentle reminder came that a business-man could scarcely be expected to wait even a poet's convenience indefinitely. 'Ah! you are in a hurry; so am I,' was the unexpected answer; and taking his hat, the poet retreated unshaven. Unluckily for the barber, he carried with him his scribbling paper, and a list of patrons' addresses was afterwards missed, which it was hard to replace. The top of a Paris omnibus was a favourite working haunt of Victor Hugo;

and in later years, the dramatist informed his intimates that much of 'Marion Delorme' was composed while pacing the pavement of a covered footway between noisy and inferior shops.

Many eminent word-artists have either found or shaped their material out of doors. It was so with Robert Browning during the earlier part of his career. Like Charles Dickens, he chose night as the season of his most stimulating wanderings. He frequented a lonely wood in the neighbourhood of Dulwich. In this retired workshop—traversing these dim aisles—great thoughts came thick, and the real preparation was made for the mechanical task of putting poem or play on paper. Whole sections of 'Strafford' and of 'Paracelsus' sprang first into being in the Dulwich woods.

To a considerable extent it was the same with Ralph Waldo Emerson. He worked best and with greatest ease when he was free to forsake great American cities—visited in his capacity of lecturer—and give himself to high thinking amidst the loved sights and sounds of the country. Wordsworth delighted to work abroad, in the lovely byways of Lake-land. When a traveller, calling at the poet's house, once requested to be shown his study, a domestic answered: 'Here is Mr Wordsworth's library; but his study is out of doors.' Washington Irving had a select working retreat by a stile in some dewy meads. Here that most English of all transatlantic authors, with writing-block upon his knee, produced as charming essays, histories, and tales as readers east and west could wish. In the quiet Hampstead lanes, young Keats, the Edmonton surgeon's apprentice, prepared the witchery of his exquisite 'Ode to the Nightingale,' 'at once vague and particular, full of mysterious life.'

The desire to avoid interruption, rather than a wish in the abstract for isolation, has probably been the first factor in numerous cases of withdrawal from the busy ways of men. The choice has sometimes been made of a fortress in a garden. Buffon, the naturalist, while in residence at Montbar, took refuge every morning at sunrise in an antique tower in his ornamental grounds, and here he wrote and sketched with a grateful sense of security from importunate lion-hunters of his day. Being in his tower one day during a violent thunder-storm, the people of Montbar trembled for his safety, and prevailed on the mayor, when the worst was over, to come and see if the reckless scientist were still a living man or a calcined victim. Samuel Richardson, in his then country-home at North End, Hammersmith, used to write in a secluded summer-house or 'grotto' in his garden. As he went to his tasks before any one in the house was up beside himself, his quiet was perfect. At breakfast he would detail the day's progress of the particular novel then on the stocks. In the grotto was a simple wooden seat, and by its side an inkhorn was slung. In this way 'Pamela,' 'Clarissa Harlowe,' and 'Sir Charles Grandison' were written.

Painters work under the same limitations as authors, and are subject to the same worries. Sometimes the studio has too many visitors. There are artists with a happy gift of abstrac-

tion in the centre of a throng. Gustave Doré was one. He would give a curt nod to callers, and go on working with single-eyed attention to his task, as if they were miles away. But others have to scheme for self-protection. A quaint summer studio with this special advantage of shutting out curiosity was devised at Magnolia by Mr Hunt, a well-known American artist. His comrades called it 'the Old Ship.' It stood in a sequestered and maze-like corner, and the second storey was appropriated by the painter. His plans constituted the refuge a veritable castle. The tenant's own means of access were a set of steps leading to a trap-door. There was no other ingress. When he meditated a bout of stiff work, the artist had merely to hoist the steps into the studio by aid of ropes and a pulley; and then, with the door closed, communication was cut off, and he was secure, and able to snap his fingers at the possible bores of Magnolia.

Workshops for authors are sometimes deliberately selected on board ship. Mr William Black has been known to shut himself up with pens, ink, and paper, in the stuffy fore-castle of a seven-ton yacht labouring along under full sail. He has cheerily defied squally weather in quest of realism. The novelist has been weaving his fictions 'while the debris of the fore-castle was rattling around him and the ropes whistling above his head.' The truth and charm of his sea-sketches show that there is a reward for such fidelity and enthusiasm. He has been able to describe ocean storm and calm as one who knows; and an old salt does not smile with derision if he comes across the narrative. Anthony Trollope often had his study on shipboard, and was a very methodical occupant, turning out his daily quantity of manuscript even under most trying conditions. On one occasion Mr Henry James was his travelling companion during an Atlantic passage, and he reports that Trollope gave a magnificent example of stiff perseverance. The season was bad, the vessel was overcrowded, and the trip detestable from beginning to end, yet the English story-teller stuck gallantly to his task. Says Mr James: 'He drove his pen as steadily on the tumbling ocean as in Montague Square. And as his voyages were many, it was his practice before sailing to come down to the ship and confer with the carpenter, who was instructed to rig up a rough writing-table in his small sea-chamber.' Trollope worked also continuously and systematically while travelling by train. He fitted up a contrivance by which the mischiefs of oscillation were reduced to a minimum, and many of his novels were thus composed.

It may be said, indeed, that genius is always and everywhere at work, hewing stones in the quarries of research and observation, or building up its structure of fame with them. The great inventors are the men who notice and interpret and use facts trivial in common estimation. The great bookmen are those who gather stores in all quarters. Many a nook and corner of the Scottish shires and of the Border hills and dales Sir Walter Scott searched for traditions of the people. Wherever a good story was to be



heard was his workshop, and there a fragment of poem or novel was practically fashioned. Macaulay roamed Cumberland and Northumberland on foot in his student days, and went into the cotters' houses, and gleaned all he could bearing on old times and a vanished literature. He made it a point never to leave a cottage until he had won from each country gossip some legend of the district or a bit of some ballad. The ingle nook was his workshop. There the brilliant essayist and historian was in the making. The variations of genius are many; but this law is common, that it appropriates its material and shapes its tools betimes for coming occasion.

## SECRET NORTHERN DESPATCHES.

By W. H. NEEDHAM.

### IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

At the time when I made my first Northern journey, the incidents whereof I am about to relate, my private income barely reached three hundred pounds a year; so, although that sum sufficed to render life fairly comfortable, I was not at all dissatisfied whenever, as sometimes happened, I was enabled to increase it by my own exertions. One of my cousins held a very good position in the Foreign Office, and as I had travelled much on the Continent, and, from occasional residence there, become a fairly good linguist, my cousin succeeded once or twice in enrolling my services, when extra messengers had been suddenly wanted. I received one morning a note from him to the effect that he had recommended me to a certain Embassy requiring a thoroughly trustworthy man on special service with despatches, and arranged that I should call on the Chancellor of the Embassy at his private residence in Bute Square to receive instructions and the despatches. At the appointed hour I found myself seated with Mr Bronskoff, a short, stout man, wearing his hair closely cut, and an extensive beard, which seemed to invade the whole of his visage, leaving but two little shoals to represent his cheeks. He wore glasses, and the eyes behind them wore an expression which at once convinced you that their owner was neither dull, slow, nor stupid. He had gathered together in the room in which we sat many little souvenirs of his native land: in one corner, before a picture of the Madonna and Child, a lighted lamp was suspended by gilt chains; and opposite, hung a fine portrait of the Emperor; the floor was partly hidden by bear and wolf skins, which, with the furniture of foreign manufacture, combined to give a most peculiar appearance to the room.

'Glad to see you, Mr West. Your cousin has no doubt given you a hint, and I will give you details. We want you to carry a very important despatch to headquarters. We will pay your expenses, and give you a honorarium of fifty pounds.'

My lips parted to speak, but Bronskoff nimbly found the words for me. 'You think that the task is very easy, and the remuneration very liberal: it is, however, open to

question. There are some contingencies to be considered. In the first place, you may never reach the capital, but possibly be shot or stabbed on the road. Will that deter you?'

'If it were a question of certainty, there might be food for reflection,' I replied; 'but you only referred to contingencies.'

'Which we will do our best to render harmless,' interrupted Bronskoff with a laugh. 'You don't speak our language, nor have ever been in our country, I believe?'

'No; but I speak French and German fluently, and I imagine'

'That they will prove useful. Quite right. But you will find many of our officials know English. I must now, in strict confidence, tell you that the queer lot of political refugees we have to deal with are cunning to an extraordinary degree, and, in spite of all our precautions, contrive, in some mysterious fashion, to know what we intend doing—almost of what we are thinking. For this reason, we have chosen you, as an outsider, wholly unconnected with ourselves, and I receive you here rather than at the Embassy, and have had'—glancing at a mahogany box placed near him—'the necessary seals and stamps brought over. You will therefore readily understand that you must be excessively cautious and prudent, and with whomsoever you deal, even if with our own officials, whatever their rank or uniform, you cannot be too careful and guarded in what you say, and the least said the better.'

I promised not to forget his recommendation, and the result was— But I must not anticipate events.

Then Bronskoff took a sheet of note-paper, opened it and turned each side up before me—manifestly wishing me to observe that nothing was written thereon—this he folded, and placed within a rather large square envelope, which he fastened with a red wax seal as big as a half-crown, bearing the Imperial arms. 'There,' said he, handing me the envelope, 'is your despatch.'

I really did not know at the moment whether to give way to laughter or anger, and stared at him in perplexity without offering to accept the proffered envelope. He smiled amusedly, and quietly said: 'This is a little ruse of my own invention. Don't you understand that it is to serve as a safeguard?'

'I see. You mean that if I am hard pressed or in a difficulty, I can allow myself to be relieved of it?'

'Just so. Now, tell me, do you sometimes carry, as I do, an odd letter or two in your pocket?'

'Yes,' I replied, divining his object; 'here are some.'

He quickly espied that one of the envelopes bore a printed address on the corner, and taking it in his hand, read out, 'Leaf & Sons, Tobacco and Cigar Merchants.' Then withdrawing the enclosure, he asked, 'Is this of any value?'

'None whatever.'

'Very well; it can go there,' said he, dropping it on the fire. Then, from his blotting pad, he produced a sheet of ruled paper bearing words in foreign script, and said: 'This is the

despatch. I will translate it to you—"Nilikoffski has decided to pass the winter in London. The report that he would try to reach the capital on Wednesday night is false."

As I listened, gazing at the fire, I certainly failed to detect anything so highly important in the communication to render necessary my special journey and the outlay of fifty pounds. I refrained making any comment, and felt that Bronskoff's eyes were watching me.

'Now, if we put this in the tobaccoist's envelope, and you carry it loosely, with those other letters, it will not be so badly hidden.'

'I agree with you.'

'But you don't confess that you are not quite satisfied,' rejoined Bronskoff.

'I am calculating probabilities.'

'On the supposition that you are tracked?' said he.

'Yes. Say, now, that I am summoned to deliver up my despatch. I bluster, pretend to show fight, but in the end hand over the sealed envelope, and so keep my skin whole and the real despatch safe—that is, provided those concerned get away—which they would, no doubt, arrange to do as quickly as possible—without first breaking the seal. But if they opened the envelope, eager to learn the contents, how then?'

'You can fight for it, I suppose,' replied Bronskoff, smiling cheerfully.

'Certainly. I know I must at any risk keep the real despatch out of their hands—if possible. But if they killed or overpowered me, they would soon unearth it.'

'I hope so,' coolly rejoined Bronskoff.

'What!' I indignantly exclaimed.

'It is the fact, my dear Mr West, that we do actually want this despatch to be read, if, as we hope, there be some people anxious to see it; so you can keep up your little comedy right through, and after resisting sufficiently to avert any suspicion, let them get the information.'

This seemed to me such a topsy-turvy proceeding, that I exclaimed, laughing: 'The despatch, then, is not really for headquarters at all?'

'A pardonable but hasty conclusion, Mr West, as I will now demonstrate to you.' Then Bronskoff took a second sheet of paper in which divers apertures were cut, and superposed it on the despatch, with the result, of course, that the only words visible were those beneath the open spaces.

I was aware of the existence of this secret method, and said: 'Yes, I understand.'

'Now,' continued Bronskoff, 'when our people apply their duplicate key, this is what they will read: "Nilikoffski has decided to try to reach the capital on Wednesday night." You now see plainly our object, which is to kill two birds with one stone. We warn headquarters through you, without any risk of betrayal; and if Nilikoffski's friends do think it worth while to read your despatch—should they be clever enough to discover you carry any—then it will only encourage Nilikoffski to risk the attempt, as he will conclude that any special precautions, as far as he is concerned, will have been relaxed. This despatch you must yourself place in the hands of General Doravitch, the

head of our police, as soon as you arrive on Wednesday. I do not think you require any further instructions or explanations; but remember, my last words to you are: deliver the despatch yourself; and at any risk or cost get through without fail or halt.'

As I turned out of the square on my way home, saying to myself, 'If the refugees are wide awake, Bronskoff is not quite asleep,' a man suddenly stopped me and inquired the way to Bute Square. 'There it is,' I replied abstractedly, too busy thinking about the refugees to bestow a thought on my interrogator.

After an early but excellent dinner—as I knew I would get nothing but indifferent food at irregular intervals until I reached the end of my journey—I drove off to the station to catch the night mail-train. I found a carriage in which were two vacant seats. I entered, and as I did so, I became aware that some one was following me, and when I seated myself, a man took the opposite place, whom I instantly recognised as him who had inquired for Bute Square. I was now aware that I was being followed. On the journey, I opened my coat to look at my watch, and, as I anticipated, the man caught sight of the dummy despatch, which my breast coat-pocket could not entirely take in; so it proved already useful to me.

I reached Dover, crossed the Channel, and got to Cologne without any untoward event. After taking some slight refreshments at the buffet, I passed on to the platform. For some reason or other, the train had rapidly filled up, and I regretted that I had delayed so long at the buffet; luckily, a guard said to me: 'Can't find a seat, sir? I can give you one; this way, sir.' He led me to the rear of the train, and opened the door of a carriage in which sat three men, muffled in fur coats and caps, and hardly visible in the smoke-laden atmosphere which pervaded the dimly lighted carriage. The men were all seated on the same side, so I had the choice of any of the places opposite. On entering, I put some newspapers I had bought on the first seat, and so sat down for the moment in the next, the middle one; then I lighted a cigar, and began scrutinising my fellow-travellers, whose language I could not understand. They spoke with animation, and appeared to be in earnest discussion, while they glanced occasionally at myself. Presently, as the train sped along, my *vis-à-vis*, addressing me in German, said: 'Have you seen the telegram, sir, about this new abominable plot? Those rascals won't leave our noble Emperor in peace. Confound them! I only wish I could hang the lot!'

It instantly occurred to me that Bronskoff had hardly reckoned on my falling into the company of such loyal folks, and I could not refrain from smiling.

This the man perceived, and immediately angrily added: 'I don't think it is a matter to provoke a smile, sir. I hope you are not, too, an enemy of His Majesty?'

'Dear me, no,' I hurriedly replied—'far from it.'

'You would rather render him a service than do him an injury?'

'Certainly,' I answered quite sincerely.

'Perhaps you would carry a despatch for him?'

Then I knew that Bronskoff would not be disappointed after all, and sitting up stiffly, I curtly retorted: 'What has that to do with you?'

'Oh! a great deal; so much so, that I am about to put the matter to the test. You needn't look so fierce; we are three to one, and it will be only giving way to superior force if you pass me your despatch.'

'But,' said I, 'how can I pass it if I have not one?'

'True, my friend; but we happen to know you have it in your breast coat-pocket.'

I made no reply. The man snapped his fingers; and the other two instantly threw themselves on me, seized my wrists, and pinioned my arms very easily, as, of course, I only made a feint of resisting. The third man then drew from my pocket the dummy despatch, smiling as he examined for a moment the big official seal. I was highly amused with the little comedy I was playing, and the more so that it was part of my cue to let the men be aware of it. Still holding the envelope, the man eyed me curiously, and evidently suspiciously; then, after exchanging a few words with his companions, he exclaimed: 'You don't seem over-concerned about losing your despatch, nor over-careful in carrying it;' and he glanced again at the envelope. 'I begin to suspect that this is nothing but a worthless blind,' and he chuckled it contemptuously on a seat. 'I think we must see if you have not some other better hidden.'

'Oh!' I replied, endeavouring to show anxiety, 'you have the despatch, and can be content. I am not going to let you treat me just as you choose;' and I began to struggle with my captors.

The man instantly exclaimed: 'Oh! just what I thought. You have, then, another. Better keep quiet. We have not followed you up all this way to let ourselves be balked.' As I ceased struggling, his hand again dived into my pocket, and he quickly found the real despatch, which he began reading to himself, but suddenly bursting out in laughter, read it off aloud; and his companions promptly joined in his merriment. They all looked at me, and I did my best now to appear angry and annoyed.

'You don't understand?' inquired the man.

'No.'

'Well, the reason we are so much amused is because we find that we have made an extraordinary mistake. Your despatch is everything that we could desire, and we shall be delighted to give you any help to deliver it. Pray, excuse us if we have had to be a little rough with you; we could not possibly foresee that things would so shape themselves.' With marked politeness the man returned me my papers, while his companions resumed their seats. Then, observing the dummy envelope, he picked it up, saying, as he handed it to me with a smile: 'You should really be more careful with your despatches—especially important ones like this,' he added with a chuckle.

'You may keep it,' I—intentionally—testily replied.

'Oh dear no! You must have all your papers in good order, and nobody will then be any the wiser about our chance meeting, as of course you will have no desire to mention it. And if you will permit me to offer you a bit of friendly advice, you will even take the greatest care not to say a single word on the subject.'

The men then resumed, with renewed animation, their conversation, and took no further notice of me.

Feeling glad that I had now got through the first and most irksome half of my business, I moved into a corner seat and fell into a doze, until a man's voice crying out, 'Change foot-warmer, sir, please,' awakened me; and I found we had pulled up at a station, and that my late companions had disappeared. As it was now all easy running right on, without risk of further complications—at least, so I then believed—I took things coolly, looking forward with a traveller's curiosity to getting over the Northern frontier and seeing a new country.

### UTILISATION OF WASTE PRODUCTS.

A MARKED, and, in some of its results, a very astonishing feature of modern industrial enterprise is the successful introduction of economical methods of working undreamt of a few years ago. Many industrial processes necessarily throw off considerable quantities of refuse, the only thought with regard to which is, frequently, how best to get rid of it. If it is solid matter, the increasing accumulations encumber the ground. If it is fluid, it most likely flowed—at least, until it was made illegal to discharge such matters into streams—into the nearest river or canal, polluting the water and destroying the fish; while waste gases and smoke vitiate and poison the atmosphere. It is in dealing with these unpromising materials that chemical and scientific skill has in some cases been remarkably successful, encouraging the hope that, in the future, much more may be accomplished in the same direction.

Of the successful treatment of solid Waste Products, gold-mining probably furnishes the most notable example. The waste heaps, or 'tailings,' were known to contain a fraction of the precious metal, even after the most searching process of extraction by the best machinery. But as there was no known method by which this residual fraction of gold could be profitably extracted, the tailings were thrown aside, and regarded as practically worthless. With the discovery of the M<sup>r</sup>Arthur Forrest or cyanide process, it has, however, become possible to recover large quantities of gold from these discarded tailings, and gold-mining companies have become alive to the actual commercial value of an asset hitherto neglected, or looked upon as an inconvenient encumbrance on the mines. The success of the industry may be inferred from the fact that during last year more than £1,250,000 in gold bullion was recovered by this process from tailings in the gold mines of South Africa alone. Such results have naturally led to its introduction into other parts of the world, and it has been found possible to

apply it profitably to the silver mines of Mexico.

The problem of utilising the waste heat and gases in connection with blast furnaces has long engaged attention and pressed for solution. In the Middlesbrough iron district, the heat from the furnaces has been turned to good account in the salt industry which is springing up there. By means of the enormous heat the brine is evaporated as a 'by' process, and the economic advantages thus secured have given the east-coast salt industry benefits in this respect denied to the Cheshire trade, where no such blast furnaces are available. With a low-priced mineral like salt, it is obvious that much depends upon economy in production.

The Caledonian Packet Company's steamers are now being fitted for the permanent consumption of liquid fuel—a kind of tar—which is recovered along with ammonia from blast-furnace gases in the Clyde district. Here, of course, the object again is economy, for tar at three-halfpence per gallon—the average price—is considerably cheaper than coal. A considerable number of the locomotives on the Great Eastern Railway are similarly fitted with a patent—the result of many years' experiment by the chief engineer of the company—for the consumption of liquid fuel. Vessels on the Caspian and Volga use the refuse from the petroleum industry in the Caucasus. It has a high calorific power—1·6 times that of good coal. The fires are automatically fed, and under perfect control, and the fuel requires little space for storage, leaves no ashes, clinkers, or dust, and is economical.

The refuse from the puddling furnaces in the South Staffordshire iron district—locally known as 'tap-cinder'—is a prominent if not very picturesque feature of the landscape of the Midlands. Hundreds of acres of land have from time to time been acquired in the vicinity of large iron-works upon which to deposit this, as it was regarded, worse than worthless material. It was a source of trouble and cost to the owner, who was glad to give it to any one who would cart it away. An eminent German chemical analyst, experimenting on tap-cinder, discovered that it contained a percentage of phosphorus, which rendered it valuable as an ingredient for the production of basic steel. The result was that it was bought in large quantities for the German market; and now, among steel-makers, tap-cinder has a recognised use, and has acquired a commercial value of from four to five shillings a ton.

Many schemes have been proposed to deal with the smoke nuisance of London and other large towns. At the Birmingham Mint a smoke and fumes annihilator is in successful operation, and serves the double purpose of destroying the smoke, while it at the same time recovers the valuable constituents in smoke which are usually wasted. The smoke is thoroughly washed, and its noxious ingredients are thus prevented from escaping into the air. The residual products accruing from the process are carbon—used for the arc light—and a liquid that has valuable properties as a disinfectant. Statistics have been compiled to show that London smoke would yield £2,125,000 annually

under such treatment; and Sir F. Knowles has stated that the ammoniacal products alone would yield sufficient manure for the growth of six million quarters of wheat a year.

The fluid refuse in connection with the waste liquors from manufactories is of very variable constitution. That of the flannel industry of Newtown, in Wales, has been found to be of considerable value to the agriculturist. It forms excellent manure, one hundredweight of it being worth, for this purpose, more than a ton of London sewage. Yet it was formerly drained off into the nearest streams, where its fertilising properties were wasted, and became a source of pollution.

More than two years ago, Professor Forbes expressed his opinion that if town refuse were properly burned, the amount provided by any population is as much as is required to supply one electric lamp per head of that population. The desirability of accomplishing this double object—the disposal of waste matter and the economical production of power—is obvious enough. It is now further claimed that at Halifax an invention is in practical operation which overcomes difficulties hitherto found insuperable, and works satisfactorily. The rubbish of that town has become a valuable asset, for, in nursery phrase, it feeds the furnace that heats the boiler that creates the steam that drives the dynamos that generate the electricity that lights the streets and buildings of the city. No sifting is necessary—ashes, dust, vegetable refuse, boots, and hats in the last stages of dissolution—everything which in the ordinary course finds its way to the dust-bin, is fit and profitable fuel for this furnace, and without the escape of the unsavoury odours, gases, and smoke-fumes which have hitherto been the inevitable products of such processes.

If this—the Livét system—answers the expectations of its promoters, we are within measurable distance of a time which will bring changes in the direction of greater economy, and an extended use of electricity in lighting all our large towns—a prospect full of hope and promise to the long-suffering householder, who will welcome such a condition of things all the more from a long experience of the obstinate tendency of gas bills to increase.

#### MIDNIGHT.

MIDNIGHT! So deep the stillness, I can hear  
The long-drawn breathings of the summer night;  
The moon has fled; tall lilies, gleaming white,  
Amid the slumb'ring darkness, fill the air  
With fragrance sweet; no living creature stirs.  
Anon, into the silent east, there steals,  
A veil of gray; one after one, it chills  
The silent stars; then, spreading swiftly, blurs  
The lilies, which, with one long shiv'ring sigh,  
Pass out of sight. Unseen, meanwhile, on high  
A lark has soared; and now its vein of song,  
Faint through the shadowy stillness breaks; ere long  
That song of faith unto a chorus grows,  
And earth anew with morning's beauty glows.

M. C. C.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,  
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.